

F 197
.L41
Copy 1

Thomas Law



F197

L41



Thomas Law



A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

BY

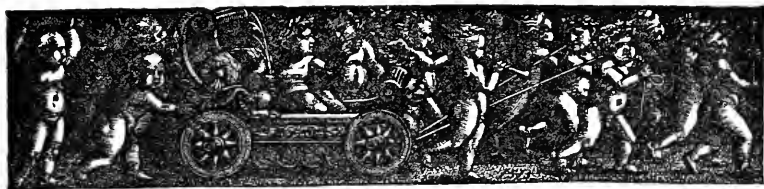
ALLEN C. CLARK



WASHINGTON, D. C.
PRESS OF W. F. ROBERTS
1900

7

10



BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH of THOMAS LAW

IN INDIA.

SEVENTEEN years since appeared in The Washington Post a series entitled "Washington Rambles" dealing with the pioneers and promoters of the Capital City. Remarkably racy and readable were these articles, and their news surprising and startling. Perhaps the new incidents were necessary to sustain the spicy style; surely, they moved the descendants to denial and dissent. I was curious to identify "Nemo." To several I made this inquiry: Do you know the author? and this uniform answer I received "Yes, sir; I do; I am." I regret I cannot to the author with certainty express the pleasure I had in his VII Ramble, with its flippant headline "The Elegant Tom Law—Warren Hasting's Secretary—All the Way from India."

I deem that research which embraces the biographies of the original owners and the initiatory investors not only interesting but important. The original proprietors and early speculators of the Federal City were men, unexceptionally, of strong mentality and striking traits; their faith exceeded the scriptural mustard seed, and their financeering eclipsed everything before and has its only parallel in the Mississippi System. John Law and Thomas Law were not of the same kindred; however, there is similarity in their careers. Both heavily speculated on phenomenal appreciation in the New World, both swayed

multitudes, both rose to affluence, both died in comparative indigence.

I have read several articles with the title "Thomas Law" which can be classified either as biography or fiction, being a jumble of fact and falsity. I propose to present nothing which has not unimpeachable verification. Mrs. Charlotte Rogers Smith, of Baltimore, the great-granddaughter of Law, has inherited his documents and correspondence, and to her I acknowledge indebtedness for accurate dates and details, also for the likenesses of Mr. and Mrs. Law.

Thomas Law was a man of merit and manners. Corresponding with his elegance in mien was his graceful letter-writing. His writings on moral philosophy prove profound thought, on economics evince wide learning. In his days of prosperity he lavished hospitality, in his days of misfortune, he bestowed in the same spirit. Of money, he cared naught, save to serve others. One familiar with his history will think of him as a bold speculator, more as a savant, pre-eminently, the gentleman.

Thomas Law, sixth son of Rt. Rev. Edmund Law, D.D., Lord Bishop of Carlisle, and Mary, daughter of John Christian of Ewanrige in Cumberland, was born October 23, 1756, at Cambridge, England, and christened at Little St. Mary's, Cambridge. Concurrence of every advantage presaging good fortune had he in his birth. The Law family was notable. The father was a man of learning and letters whose doctrinal ideas expressed in his writings excited controversy.

Mr. Law's brothers and sisters were:

John, born 1745, Bishop of Clonfert in 1782, translated to Killala in 1787 and to Elphin in 1795.

Edward, born 1750, was the leading counsel for the defendant in the Warren Hasting's trial and had as antagonists that galaxy of luminaries of law and letters: Burke, Fox, Sheridan, Grey and Francis; his signal triumph resulted in his selection as Attorney-General in 1801 and the customary honor of Knighthood. In the following year was made Lord Chief Justice and elevated to the peerage as Baron Ellenborough of Ellenborough Co., Cumberland. A title derived from the ancient patrimony of his grandmother's family.

George Henry, D.D., born 1761, Bishop of Chester in 1812, translated to Bath and Wells in 1824.

Ewan, married eldest daughter of Archbishop of York.

Mary, married Rev. James Stephen Lushington.

Johanna, married Sir Thomas Rumbold, Baronet.

Culture the family had, and that concurrent, essential to contentment, wealth. Thomas Law, in his will dated 1832, says: "Happily my relations are above any aid from me." I think he had in mind his nephew in England, Edward, first earl of Ellenborough, who then, in a life position, clerk of the Queen's bench, drew annually £7,000. A rich office without work seems conducive to longevity as the Earl did not succumb until he had drawn £400,000.

It has been in print that Law was the private secretary of Lord Hastings, that in this capacity he was peculiarly qualified to know and to testify of his chief's methods; that the King summoned him to speedily appear at the trial in England. That Law forthwith in compliance with the royal mandate converted his assets into cash and packed his belongings into his trunks. That suddenly he detected his system had been impaired by India's torrid rays and he decided America was the haven of health, likewise an escape from his benefactor's betrayal. Or he got so twisted he thought the King's subpœna to come to England was an invitation to go to America.

I can state with confidence that Law was not secretary to Lord Hastings nor connected with him in any confidential capacity. Law's narratives of his career in India makes only one mention of Hastings, and that casual. Hastings embarked for England in 1785 and the preliminaries of the impeachment began in 1786. Law went directly to England and engaged himself in a treatise on India. In the preface he says: "In 1791 sickness compelled me to relinquish my station and since my arrival in England," etc. A copy is lodged in the Library of Congress; its title page reads: *A Sketch of Some Late Arrangements and a View of the Rising Resources in Bengal. By Thomas Law. Late a Member of the Council of Revenue in Fort William. London, John Stockdale, Piccadilly, MDCCXCII.* The book has marginal lead pencil notes explanatory of the Indian terms in the handwriting of Mr. Law.

Mr. Law was defamed and derided in his lifetime. Sneers and slanders contained in a criticism of Faux's *Memorable Days in America* called forth *A Reply to Certain Insinuations Published as an Article in the Fifty-eighth Number of the Quarterly*

Review, by Thomas Law, Washington, 1824. To this publication I owe specially account of Mr. Law's life in India.

From motives prompted by patriotism and local pride the sympathies will be with Mr. Law in the controversy when it appears The Review applauds and amplifies such comments as:

Fools must not come, for Americans are naturally cold, jealous, suspicious and knavish, have little or no sense of honor, believing every man a rogue until they see the contrary.

There is, indeed, a something in a real upright and downright honest John Bull that cannot be found in the sly, say-nothing, smiling, deep-speculating, money-hunting Jonathans of this all-men-are-born-equally-free-and-independent, negro-driving, cow-skin republic.

There is a national church liturgy in England, and if ever there should be one adopted here the following, I think, ought to form part of it:

Money, money, is all our cry,
Money, the total sum!
Give us money or else we die;
O let thy money come.

The (Washington) streets are a mile or two in length, with houses a quarter of a mile apart, beautified by trees and swamps and cows grazing between. At first view, a stranger might suppose that some convulsion of nature had swept away whole streets and laid waste the far-famed metropolitan city.

All the bogs and swamps in and round the city are full of melody, from the big bellowing bullfrog, down to the little singing mosquito; while rotten carcasses and other nuisances perfume the warm southern breeze.

The prefatory paragraph of Law's reply, I in part quote :

An accumulation of domestic afflictions that I had suffered, aggravated by the common casualties of life, incident to its decline had shaken the frame of my constitution. Weary, therefore, of the cares and bustle of busy society, yet neither unsolicitous nor unoccupied for its welfare, I had sometime since retired from the city into the country. In such retirement one of my first employments was to select from a mass of written documents a few letters and communications on public affairs during my residence in India, which afford evidence of what I did in that country. These memoranda, thus brought together, I had packeted, indulging a natural desire that after my death an only surviving son might peruse them with gratifying tenderness. It is the privilege of a sufferer to complain, and whenever a character is assailed it may be fairly and firmly sustained without involving its advocate in the imputation of vanity and arrogance. To vindicate aspersed merit or insulted integrity is a duty that I owe both to the dead and the living, and, in the discharge of it, I shall not, I trust, however excited by aggression, at once unprovoked and unprincipled, forget to exercise that mild spirit of Christian forbearance and charity which the best of fathers so well remembered taught both by precept and example. Under such peculiar circumstances egotism will not, I trust, be imputed to me, if, when

driven by slander into refutations of it—by statements of opposite complexion—I prematurely publish testimonials, which otherwise, delicacy might have prevented me from causing to be circulated in my lifetime.

The Review thus speaks of Law's conduct and character:

This gentleman accumulated (it is not said by what means) an immense fortune in India, where by his own account he was a most important personage: "Why, sir, I once, with Lord Cornwallis, governed India. *Ego et rex meus.*" He talks with the greatest composure of having carried away an hundred thousand guineas.

Mr. Law says:

I arrived in Bengal at the age of seventeen, in the capacity of writer, an office which is introductory to employment in the civil service of the East India Company. After serving the usual term of noviciate in this station I successively passed through the various grades of promotion until I was chosen member of the Revenue Board at Hoagley. I was next appointed judge of Patna; but this office, after holding it for a short time, I thought proper to resign. At the age of twenty-seven I attained promotion to the collectorship of Bahar. Shortly afterwards the number of these collectors was curtailed; and inasmuch as I had been the last collector appointed, I had good reason to expect that my office would be abolished. Government, however, for causes publicly assigned, chose to retain me.

The office of collector, in which, at this early age, I was retained, was certainly of a more responsible and important nature than the name would indicate, since with the fiscal duties of a revenue officer was blended in cases both civil and criminal the judicial and executive functions of chief magistrate; and this, too, over a district containing more than two million souls.

Gya, the capital of Bahar, was venerated by the Hindoos as is Mecca by the Mahometans. Pilgrims had formerly resorted to it from all parts of India, but onerous exactions deterred them from fulfilling this religious usage. A moderation of the tax through Law's persuasion so increased the number of pilgrims the revenues realized were even larger, for which he received congratulatory and compensatory recognition from the Board of Control at London.

So popular was Law's administration upon his retirement he received at Calcutta a letter dated July 12, 1790, enclosing this

ADDRESS:

The just Judge and beneficent Magistrate, Mr. Thomas Law, who during six years presided over the district of Bahar, having in his excellent administration displayed the most laudable qualities, and performed the most praiseworthy actions; having studied the welfare of all ranks of people, distinguishing the

liberal and noble, rendering justice to the oppressed, and cherishing the afflicted; giving ease and satisfaction to all; shewing natural goodness and acquired virtues in his conduct, to the high and to the low, to the rich and to the poor; treating all with kindness, and receiving from all a good name, whereby the happiness of the people and the prosperity of the country were promoted: We therefore, with one voice, and one mind, of our free will and accord, make the following declaration: That we, all of us, are, in every respect, satisfied with, and grateful to, the gentleman above mentioned, and that we regard his administration as a blessing to us. Now it happens that this gentleman is about to quit our district, and we are, one and all, in the greatest degree afflicted; we are impressed with the deepest concern on this account, and having our hands lifted up to the Deity, in prayer for his life, prosperity and exaltation; may the Almighty God accept our prayers, advance him to the highest dignities, and bless him with every enjoyment worldly and heavenly!

Mr. Law yielded to the entreaties of Marquis Cornwallis, the Governor-General, although in declining health, to serve on the Revenue Board. This service was short, as his physician insisted he must at once embark from Calcutta, which he did, January 25, 1791.

Mr. Law's hobby was the institution of the Mocurrery land system. His arguments therefor given in the work on Bengal show a knowledge on Indian affairs and a grasp of policy, generally, which can only adequately be characterized by such descriptives as: complete, consummate.

Shortly after Mr. Law's return to England, the Board of Control adopted his plan. That he is entitled to the sole credit for its establishment, these letters indicate:

14TH APRIL, 1794.

DEAR LAW:

I read your letter yesterday with concern. But if your resolution is taken it will be needless for me to expostulate. You may be assured that I shall never cease to acknowledge with gratitude the lights that I have received from you respecting the Mocurrery system and permanent settlement; and that you will always possess a great share of my regard and esteem.

Your most faithful friend,

CORNWALLIS.

23TH MARCH, 1796.

* * * * * I shall ever with gratitude acknowledge you as the founder.

CORNWALLIS.

William Duane, a journalist, who figures prominently in the early history of our city, was in India at the time of Law's

departure and an eye-witness of the effects of the new land system. He writes:

We have known Mr. Law now more than thirty years. We knew him when he was inferior to no man in eminence and in power, the third or fourth in degree in a great empire; and this was at a time, too, when, by his own generous efforts, pursued with zeal and talent that commanded general admiration and esteem, he brought about a revolution, the influence of which now extends to one hundred and twenty millions of people, as great in its moral and political influence as the extinction of the feudal system. In Hindostan, in the Mogul government, the tenure of land was in the emperor, and reverted upon the demise of the holder. The afflictions produced by such a system cannot be conceived by those who have not been eye-witnesses of them. Upon the death of a zemindar, or landholder, where polygamy prevails, and the children and females are numerous, the death of the head of a family, where no provision has been otherwise made, cannot be well imagined. Mr. Law, who held the government of a rich and populous province, under the Bengal administration, proposed what has been called the Mocurrery system, that is, to make land personal property, and not to revert to the sovereign. This plan, pursued through several years of zeal and devotion to humanity, he accomplished. The Norman conquest, the revolution in England of 1688, were great events, and they mark epochs in history, and are treated as such; while Mr. Law's revolution, without bloodshed, eventually changed the whole moral and social condition of Hindostan, settled estates in possessors as personal property, and put an end to all the calamities which were consequent of the old system; yet the event is scarcely heard of; perhaps there are not three men in this country who ever heard of it yet."

The editors of the *National Intelligencer*, between whom and Law was close relationship, state that because of his beneficent administration he received the enviable appellation—"Father of the People."

That "accomplished man, learned lawyer and excellent scholar," Sir William Jones, whom Dr. Johnson styled "the most enlighten'd of the sons of men," was an intimate of Mr. Law, in India, and presented him with a mourning ring. To Mr. Law, Lord Cornwallis gave his miniature, a memorial of friendship, a remembrance of by-past association.

It has been published that Mr. Law was led to come to the young republic by his enthusiasm in free institutions and his admiration for General Washington. However, the real motives he has himself given. Ten thousand pounds, one-fifth of the fortune acquired in India, were arrested in his attorney's hands by the company's government to satisfy its claim against

a paymaster for whom he was surety. Law insisted that the principal being financially responsible should have been compelled to pay. This injustice, together with disapprobation of the War with France, determined his departure. Mr. Law instituted suit for restitution against The East India Company, which, when he was a resident of the United States, July 24, 1799, was decided in his favor. Reported in 4 Vesey, 824.







IN WASHINGTON.

IN 1794 Law appeared. He first resided in the city of New York. During the year 1795 he made three or more visits to the Federal City; and late that year, or early the next, came to stay. He put up in Georgetown because, as he says, "there was only one little tavern in the city, which then contained only three or four houses belonging to the owners of estates."

Tom Law, a widower, only thirty-seven, the scion of British aristocracy, a lord of India, bright in speech, elegant in manner, and handsome, and a plethoric purse withal! Can we imagine he was unnoticed? How the dames with eligible daughters, covetous of their worldly welfare, must have manœuvred, and how the belles looked beautiful and tried to do it unconsciously. It was a short race. Early in 1796 the engagement with Eliza Park Custis was announced, and March 21st, that year, the marriage was celebrated. What an auspicious union: Miss Custis, a descendant of Lord Baltimore, a granddaughter of Mrs. Washington, wife of the first President—to Tom Law, paragon of manly perfection.

The wedding* was at the home of her stepfather, Mr. David Stuart, "Hope Park," Virginia, five miles northwest of Fairfax Court-House. Miss Custis was born August 21, 1776, so that the bride and groom were of age nineteen and thirty-nine respectively. Mr. Stuart was of the first Board of Commissioners for the Federal City, appointed January 22, 1791; he served three years.

* On the 20th instant at the seat of David Stewart, Esq., Thomas Law, youngest son of the late Bishop of Carlisle, to Miss Custis, granddaughter of the Lady of the President of the United States. *From Claypole's American Daily Advertiser*, Philadelphia, Penn., March 28. 1796.

A marriage settlement, technically termed, an indenture tripartite, was executed March 19, 1796, between Thomas Law, Elizabeth Park Custis, and as trustee, James Barry. Other indentures tripartite, May 8, 1800, and July 17, 1802, were executed between Mr. and Mrs. Law and their brother-in-law, Thomas Peter, substituted trustee, substantially the same as the original. In the cause celebre, the chancery suit of Law against Adams, executor, involving twenty-five years active litigation, the Supreme Court of the United States construed these ante and post-nuptial agreements. Mr. Law survived Mrs. Law; their only child, Eliza, died before her parents, leaving children. The Court decided the expression, "in case the said wife shall die in the life-time of her husband, leaving issue of said marriage one or more children," defined "issue" to be children and that it had no right to extend the meaning to include grandchildren. This was not Mr. Law's idea, as his will states: "I have settled upon the children of my daughter Eliza more than I fear my other grandchildren will receive."

Marital felicity was short-timed. Abroad Mr. Law went (1802) and tarried; and when he did return, a mutual arrangement, August 10, 1804, was signed and sealed to continue "separate and apart" for aye. The direct cause of disagreement is not disclosed. The chivalrous Law rightly surmised silence would stifle scandal. Surely, honorable in this particular he made ample provision for the maintenance of his wife by an annuity of fifteen hundred dollars, assumed the custody of the daughter, the sole cost of her education and support. Time did not cure the bitterness; rather than heal the estrangement it aggravated. Mr. and Mrs. Law always referred to each other in the third person. With no stranger could she have been more formal. She invariably called herself Mrs. Custis, and so did he name her, except once,—in the publication *A Reply to Certain Insinuations*. The Quarterly Review says: "He married the niece of General Washington, and settled on her, at her uncle's urgent request, in case they parted, 15,000 dollars a year. Accordingly, as was obviously anticipated, at least, on the part of the lady and her friends,

(20th)

() I have been advised, by two gentlemen,
to visit a certain the station for (I said) with the
great railway (London). East in the (British)

I friend of (I said) (an agent of mine), to
let them have a chair (I said) (Washington, London)

(I said) (an agent of mine) not to (I said) (I said)
(I said) (an agent of mine) (I said) (I said) (I said)

(I said) (an agent of mine) (I said) (I said) (I said)

9.7.7

not an improper warehouse, as there is now for
already say that some will not part with any
more on these terms

17th Dec 1894

17th Dec 1894

LAW TO GREENLEAF, DECEMBER 14, 1794

she eloped, during his absence, with a young officer in the army." Mr. Law indignantly denies and adds "that, although a separation did unhappily ensue, originating in a disagreement in disposition, yet I have always paid tribute correctly due to Mrs. Law's purity of conduct, which I never did impeach."

The annuity was a financial millstone around Law's neck; he paid promptly for sixteen years and then in installments long apart derived by pledge of property and embarrassing expedients.

Mr. Law had in India two sons, John and Edmund, who were sent to England. Upon his marriage to Miss Custis his sons came over and lived with them. Edmund never married. John married Frances Ann Carter of Virginia; they had two sons: Edmund and Thomas.

Mr. and Mrs. Law had one daughter, Eliza, who married Lloyd Nicholas Rogers, of Druid Hill, Baltimore County, Maryland. Mrs. Law* died (a few days before Mr. Law's return from abroad) on a visit to Richmond, January 1, 1832, and is buried at Mt. Vernon in the Washington tomb.

I quote few of the many references to "nabob" Law in *Travels in America, 100 Years Ago, by Thomas Twining*, to indicate his cordiality, manner of life, and enthusiasm in the American venture:

Baltimore, 1796. I had not long returned to my own room after breakfast this morning before I was told that a gentleman had called upon me and was waiting in the passage below. When I was within a few steps of the bottom of the stairs, a gentleman advanced hastily to meet me, and taking me warmly by the hand, said: "I am sure you are Mr. Thomas Twining, you are so like your father." This unceremonious stranger was Mr. Law, just arrived from Washington. I took him into a parlor on the ground floor and there we had a long conversation about India, where he still had many friends.

25th April. Mr. and Mrs. Law set out in their chariot and four horses for Washington. I had not seen such an equipage in America. They invited me to accompany them, but besides my unwillingness to add to their inconvenience on the bad roads they had to travel, I had some engagements which prevented my leaving Baltimore until the next day.

27th. Mr. Law sent a servant to Georgetown with my horse, with directions to bring back my portmanteau.

* At Mr. J. A. Chevallie's in Richmond, Va., on Saturday night, Mrs. Eliza Park Custis, granddaughter of the late Mrs. General Washington, aged 55.—*Daily National Intelligencer*, January 7, 1832.

Our respected fellow-citizen THOMAS LAW, Esq., arrived in this city yesterday, via New York, from a visit to Europe.—*Daily National Intelligencer*, January 10, 1832.

In the evening, Miss Wescott, of Philadelphia arrived. Though possessing a sort of celebrity for her talents and literary attainments, her manners were particularly unaffected and agreeable.

28th. Spent the day with Mr. Law's family. Monsieur Talleyrand, Ex-Bishop of Autun, whom the hostility of parties in France had driven across the Atlantic was expected from Philadelphia, but much to my regret did not come.

29th. Mr. and Mrs. Law took me in their carriage this forenoon to introduce me to Mr. Lear and his family, residing near Georgetown. * * *

Miss Custis, sister of Mrs. Law, arrived. A letter from Monsieur Talleyrand announced that he was under the necessity of deferring his visit. * * *

1st May. Although Mr. Law seemed satisfied with his new situation, having a companion with whom a man might be happy anywhere, I could not but be surprised at the plan of life he had chosen. The clearing of ground and building of small houses, amongst the woods of the Potomac, seemed an uncongenial occupation for a man of so accomplished a mind, and whose former habits and employment had been so different. As chief of a large district in Bengal he had been accustomed to the discharge of important official functions, and to the splendor and consequence of a prince. In England his family was opulent and distinguished. One brother was bishop of Carlisle, another was a barrister of the first eminence, and the successful defender of Mr. Warren Hastings against the political influence of Fox, the eloquence of Sheridan, and the virulence of Burke. America, of all countries, seemed the least suited to the activity or leisure of such a person. Here almost everyone was engaged either in politics or speculative enterprise. But as a foreigner, and particularly as an Englishman, Mr. Law could never possess any political weight in the country; and his inexperience in commercial affairs, amidst rivals so experienced and intelligent, might expose him to litigation and disappointment, and involve a considerable diminution of his fortune. One anticipation in which he indulged, with great confidence and satisfaction, was that other East-Indians would join him; and he hoped, I was sorry to see, that I might return to Bengal with impressions tending to encourage this migration. As we stood one evening on the bank of the river before his door, he said: "Here I will make a terrace, and we will sit and smoke our hookahs."

To locate the site of Mr. Law's residence we have only to give heed to Mr. Twining's intelligent and circumstantial narration. Mr. Twining's journey horseback from the Capitol to Mr. Law's house through a wilderness was generally in a southwest direction or on the line of Delaware Avenue. Mr. Twining says: "His (Law's) house, built by himself, was only a few yards from the steep bank of the Potomac, and commanded a fine view across the river, here a half a mile wide. * * * * The position was at least favorable, being on a point of land between the Potomac and a tributary stream called 'the eastern branch,' thus offering a double water front."



MR. LAW'S RESIDENCE
SIXTH AND N. STREETS SOUTHWEST

And, "a little below the point on which Mr. Law's house stood, after the junction of the eastern branch, the river was nearly a mile in width." These descriptions identify the general location—on Greenleaf Point and immediately north of the Arsenal Grounds. The court, tax and state records indicate the exact location—square 502.

That the mansion at the northeast corner of Sixth and N Streets S. W. is Mr. Law's first residence and where he entertained Mr. Twining, the corroborating circumstances, in my opinion, are conclusive. At that time the mansion was about fifty yards* from the high bank of the Potomac; then and a long period after, it was the only house in the vicinity fronting the river. No other was nearly so close to it. Besides it was the only house apart; the other expensive buildings were in rows. A history of old houses in southwest Washington states that Law *built* the house; this is a traditional error; yet confirms the fact that he did occupy it.

Twining says that it was built by Law, and that "in the rear of the house" he "was building a street, consisting of much smaller houses than his own," referring, of course, to Union Street. Twining surely misunderstood. Law did not build the mansion, nor the small houses. In the chancery causes are schedules, in great particularity prepared by Law, of all his improvements. The syndicate, Morris, Nicholson and Greenleaf owned the property, Law had a blanket mortgage covering it. Morris Nicholson and Greenleaf were the landlords, Law the tenant. On September 17, 1796, Morris and Nicholson wrote Law: "We willingly agree rent shall cease when you moved out and not continue either to the expiration of the time you took it for or when you delivered up the key." The property was sold under decree in Pratt et al vs. Law et al to Richard Bland Lee, who occupied it.

The East Washington Citizens Association in the beginning of the century was exceedingly active and alert, and could readily detect favoritism to the West End although at that

* Dermott's Tin Case Map, 1803.

time there was only one member. I quote from the unpublished notes of Mr. Law:

Being now the oldest inhabitant it may be useful to give a brief history of the city since my arrival here. The legislature of Maryland had started a bank for the city, but it was established in George Town and the money loaned was to those who would build in the Town or at the West End of the city. A bridge was built also by the Commissioners at the city expense over Rock Creek with a draw, and it was to have the Navy Yard there and the Marine barracks were laid out on its banks and the marine corps encamped there.

The President's house was advanced rapidly and the Capitol was only above ground and the foundation was so bad that it was to be undone and commenced again. In short Mr. Stoddert, Secretary of Navy, and the majority of the Commissioners and the bank being George Town men, resolved to have Congress meet in the President's House or in George Town College and to make the progress of the West End tend to counteract that of the Capitol.

General Washington having been informed of these injurious ideas in the Commissioners and being displeased at witnessing the slow advancement of the Capitol ordered the Commissioners to live in the city and to encourage persons to build for the accommodation of Congress.

And Mr. Law further says:

That the public might have encouragement to build, General Washington commenced two houses.* This example gave confidence and houses were seen to spring up with rapidity, notwithstanding the natural rivalry of two adjacent towns, which had been long before established. New Jersey Avenue, then full of stumps of trees, was opened to have access to the Eastern Branch, and merchants made wharves and warehouses on the Eastern Branch, where only there is a harbor safe from the danger of ice which comes down by floods in the Potomac. Houses also rapidly sprang up about the Capitol although double prices were paid for workmen, bricks and materials.

From Law's answer, Pratt et al vs. Law et al:

Had it not been for his (Law's) exertions and the large sums he had laid out, there would have been no accommodation for Congress the first year of their session.

Law to Greenleaf, January 8, 1795, wrote: "You may say that I had rather sell my horses or books or anything rather than part with a foot at present of Washington City;" and not many months later his extravagant enthusiasm was centered on his chosen section:

July 4th 1795

Dear Greenleaf

You have a Copy of my two Lres to the Commissioners, six squares they promised to convey to me & I was promised an answer in two days to the Lre I addressed respecting the Wharf &c but I have not yet been favored with an

* That is—in the vicinity of the Capitol. Were built where is now the Hillman House, North Capitol Street.

answer. Barry is urgent—he wants to erect a store & to purchase grain & to build a ship—I mean to set up an agency house with him from East India Commissions in short I wish to benefit myself by promoting the City. Have I been wanting in respect or in attentions—my style is not harsh my request not immoderate—Yet not a line I received from them—Do not the Commissioners in their agreements with you strictly require you not to sell before Jan^y 1796 with stipulations for buildings—who however *will build without titles*.

* * * * *

The City can only be made by the Eastern Branch. The President himself when he sees all that has hitherto been done will feel how much that part of the City has been overlooked * * * he will blush when he perceives where the Commissioners have made their Wharf—in short he will order some measures to be adopted to let the City branch out from the proper root—the Eastern Branch.

* * * * *

Pray rem^b to have the Post Office established at the Capitol.

* * * Carroll altho' enfeebled with age was the most zealous & active of the three—but no more of this. I am heartily tired of murmurs to you who must be sufficiently chagrined—harmony & union can do great things—they however cannot exist whilst the comm^{rs} reside *West of the President's House*.

Yrs Sy

THOMAS LAW.

In 1804 appeared Mr. Law's *Observations on the Intended Canal in Washington City*. It was his idea to extend navigation through the city from the Potomac to deep water of the Eastern Branch, thereby avoiding "the circuitous and hazardous route by Turkey Buzzard point" and advancing magnetically commercial prosperity. In 1809 on the lines he suggested a company was incorporated. This refers to the Washington City Canal. Mr. Law insistently urged before Congress concession for the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal; and made "proposition for creating means for commencing" the construction, 1827.

From the burning of the Capitol, August 24, 1814, and the War and Navy Departments the following day, and other havoc to public and private property by the British under direction of General Ross and Admiral Cockburn a serious question arose: whether the buildings should be reconstructed at all. The city's growth had been slow; at that date there were only fifteen hundred houses and next to nothing had been

accomplished in the improvement of the thoroughfares. Congress was convened. A strong party inveighed against Washington; arguments of the original opponents were reinforced by the city's poor progress. In the balance, swaying up and down, was removal against permanency. These were days of anxious suspense to the citizens. Thomas Law, by the use of his diplomacy and his influential acquaintanceship, by his pen and by his purse, by his ceaseless energy wrought the retention of the National Capital at the city of Washington.

LETTER TO PRESIDENT MADISON.

SIR:

When I heard of the conflagration of the Capitol and so forth, I indulged the belief that a temporary misfortune would be converted to a benefit and that I should have the satisfaction of witnessing prosperity here dated from your administration of government.

The enclosed proposition I submit to your perusal with all deference, in it, I have considered the claims of the heads of departments, whose salaries are now so inadequate to the expenses of their dignified station and I have adverted also to the convenience and interest of all concerned.

Lord Kaimies sagaciously remarks that "rough uncultivated ground dismal to the eye inspires peevishness and discontent" and I have long attributed much of the discord in Congress to causes arising in this city from distance of residence, want of social amusements and confinement together, where dissatisfaction is engendered and dissensions produced.

I have also long apprehended that parsimony and neglect exhibited in this city would tend to deceive foreign governments into contempt of the national spirit productive of insults and injuries till insupportable and that foreign ministers also under impressions received here must convey unfavorable intimations from what daily could not escape their notice.

These sentiments I communicated to many frequently and as they have been verified I hope to be pardoned the liberty of repeating them, with the sincere desire to see every edifice arise with superior convenience and splendor.

What now remains of empires fallen but a few monuments of former grandeur. What is the glory of Great Britain but her universities, hospitals and public endowments.

It may be urged that General Washington recommended a university and military school in vain; the opprobrium of neglect remains with Congress, and regrets now arise for inattention to his advice and a disposition prevails to re-erect the public buildings and to establish institutions which will be a lasting honor to this government.

Every individual citizen who shall behold them will feel his bosom swell with exultation and exclaim "this is ours" and thus identify himself with his nation.

Any recommendation you make, Sir, at this crisis would be adopted, as a general inclination prevails not only to do away causes of complaint but to promote the permanent seat of government.

May you, Sir, when you retire to enjoy in private the contemplation of your numerous services, have the satisfaction of seeing the Constitution you so much promoted preserved from external assault and internal undermining and every prosperity in this Metropolis bearing the name of the revered Hero, Statesman and Patriot—Washington.

I remain
With unfeigned
Esteem, regard and respect
Yr. mt. ob. servant,

Novr. 26th, 1814.

THOS. LAW.

In the Washington Centennial Exhibition at the Library of Congress, now in progress (December, 1900), is a copy of the petition of the committee, Daniel Carroll of Duddington, Thomas Law and Frederick May, appointed at a general meeting of the citizens held on Capitol Hill, to John P. Van Ness, Richard Bland Lee and Tench Ringgold, the Commissioners appointed to superintend the re-erection of public buildings destroyed by the British, 1814, together with the original letter of Mr. Law to President Madison transmitting it; also, autograph draft of the President's answer. The purport of the petition is the erection of an edifice on Capitol Hill, wherein Congress could assemble while the Capitol was rebuilding.

Thomas Law,* Daniel Carroll of Duddington, and other public-spirited citizens, with utmost expedition, subscribed the funds and erected a suitable building, which they offered to Congress. And with like promptness did Congress act. It took possession of the new "Capitol" immediately upon completion (December 13, 1815), and, upon the terms proposed, authorized the President to lease for one year, and "thence until the Capitol is in a state of readiness for the reception of Congress." It was not until December 7, 1819, that Monroe could say to Congress "I offer you my sincere

*Paul Jennings, *the colored* body-servant of James Madison, says: The next summer (1815) "Mr. John Law, a large property-holder about the Capitol, fearing it would not be rebuilt, got up a subscription and built a large brick building (now called the Old Capitol, where the Secesh prisoners are now confined), and offered it to Congress for their use till the Capitol should be rebuilt. This coaxed them back, though strong efforts were made to move the seat of government North; but the Southern members kept it here."—*The National Capitol, Its Architecture, Art and History*, by George G. Hazleton, Jr.

congratulation upon the recommencement of your duties in the Capitol."

It has been claimed that Law "was head and shoulders above every other original proprietor and early speculator;" that he "secured the permanence of the Capitol in the old times, by the same means Alex. Shepherd assured its stability in our days." Although Mr. Law was an educator and did so much for the city, no school or other institution bears his name, but do of others who to him in calibre were as pygmies to a colossus.

Mr. Law wrote on current topics under the pseudonym "Homo" for the *National Intelligencer*. The initial issue of this paper (October 31, 1800) was printed in a house of Mr. Law's on New Jersey Avenue. I have seen verses of Mr. Law's drawn from what he styled his "poetical ludibria." Some of his papers read to the Columbian Institute on the national currency, the national banking system and the public debt were published. In everything he seems decades in advance of his contemporaries. In one of his letters he predicts the result of slavery will be civil war. He learnedly discussed the cultivation of the soil, very likely, more from a theoretical than a practical viewpoint, with the Agricultural Society of Prince George's County, of which he was the inspiring spirit.

The National Museum is the outgrowth of the Columbian Institute for the Promotion of Arts and Sciences.* The Institute was originated by Mr. Law and Dr. Edward Cutbush. The date of its first meeting is June 28, 1816; its charter by Congress, April 20, 1818. The second article of its constitution states: "The Institute shall consist of mathematical, physical, moral and political sciences, general literature and fine arts."

A compilation of Mr. Law's publications as far as known to writer :

1792. Sketch of some late arrangements and a review of the rising resources of Bengal. London, 1792. 8 vo. Lib. Cong.
 1794. On Bengal, etc. Perhaps another ed. of that printed in 1792. Quoted by Allibone.

* Report of the National Museum, 1891. *The Genesis of the National Museum*, pp. 274-280.

- 1804. Observations on the intended canal in Washington City. Anon. Washington, 1804. pp. 24, 8 vo. Lib. Cong.
- 1806. Ballston Springs. A poem. New York, 1806. Boston Ath.
- 1813. Moral Impulses. Philadelphia.
- 1820. Remarks on the report of the Secretary of the Treasury, March 1, 1819. Wilmington, 1820. 8 vo. Boston Ath.
- 1824. A reply to certain insinuations, published as an article in the sixty-eighth number of the *Quarterly Review*. Washington, 1827. pp. 1-27, 8 vo. Lib. Cong.
- 1825. Address before the Columbian Institute. Washington, 1825. 8 vo. Boston Ath.; Lib. Cong.
- 1826. Considerations tending to render the policy questionable of plans for liquidating, within the next four years, of the 6 per cent. stock of the United States. Washington, S. A. Elliott, 1826. pp. 22, 8 vo. Lib. Cong.; Boston Ath.
- 1827. Thomas Law (and others). Report of the proceedings of the committee appointed in Washington in 1824 to present a memorial to Congress, praying for the establishment of a national currency. Washington: Way and Gideon, 1824. pp. 40, 8 vo. Lib. Cong.; Boston Ath.
- 1827. Propositions for creating means for commencing the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, with report of committee thereon. Washington, 1827. 1 folio sheet, Lib. Cong.
- 1828. Address to the Columbian Institute on a moneyed system. Washington, 1828. 8 vo. Lib. Cong.; Boston Ath.
- 1830. Address to the Columbian Institute on the question, "What ought to be the circulating medium of a nation?" Washington, 1830. 8 vo. Lib. Cong.; Boston Ath.
- 1833. Synopsis of a plan for a national currency. Washington, 1833. pp. 16, 8 vo. Lib. Cong.
- 1833. A plan for one uniform circulating medium, etc., Anon, Washington, about 1833. pp. 4, 8 vo. Lib. Cong.

Law speculated on his own pounds sterling, most of the other operators on credit. The principal transaction was upon "sight unseen;" in the city of New York, with city map and winning words, Greenleaf fired Laws' enthusiasm and opened wide his purse strings. The transaction was that of December 3, 1794, when Robert Morris, John Nicholson and James Greenleaf gave him their bond with condition to convey in fee simple within ninety days 2,400,000 sq. ft., Law having paid them five pence Pennsylvania currency per sq. ft. for the same or in our standard about \$137,500. On the day following an agreement was executed by which Morris, Nicholson and Greenleaf covenanted that if Law within eighteen months should be displeased with his purchase, the consideration would be returned with

interest; and Law covenanted that if within that time he determined to keep the land he would within four years from time of such determination cause to be built on every third lot, or in that proportion, one brick building at least two stories high. On March 10, 1795, Law made the purchase absolute and Morris Nicholson and Greenleaf agreed that Law could select under the contract of December 4, from any squares in which they had right of selection and also agreed to mortgage to Law other squares which were in their possession until they could give him good title to such property as he might select. Pursuant to this last agreement September 4, 1795, the mortgage was executed. Law received nearly 2,000,000 sq. ft. but before Morris Nicholson and Greenleaf could perfect title to the balance of Law's selection, they made an assignment, June 26, 1797, to Pratt and others, trustees.

The entanglements of this transaction and its ramifications was solved in the celebrated cause, Pratt et al vs. Law et al. It occupies 45 pp. of the U. S. Supreme Court report. Mr. Justice Johnson who delivered the opinion speaks of it as "intricate and voluminous," and of "the formidable bulk of 900 folios!"

The trustees contended that Law had failed to comply with the covenant to build on every third lot or in that proportion and that the failure was to their detriment. However the court decided that Law was not restricted to specific lots on which to build; his choice, therefore, extended over the whole and the obligation was not complete until the whole was conveyed to him; and that, Law was originally induced to enter into the stipulation in consideration of similar stipulations by Morris Nicholson and Greenleaf with the Commissioners and that their failure was an excuse in part for desisting in building. In this litigation, Mr. Law was ably represented by his son, John.

Law, I believe, was the only lot purchaser who complied with the building requirements on an extensive scale. Controversy arose between the Commissioners and Law who contended more stories and larger area covered entitled to a concession in the number of houses. President Washington, the last day of his administration March 3, 1797, decided in favor of Mr. Law with an expression of reluctance.

Law decided to build on either side of New Jersey Avenue from the Capitol to the Potomac. The solidity of his structures is shown by the fact they stand to day apparently of sufficient strength for the wear of another century. In the consolidated chancery causes, Pratt vs. Law, etc., is a schedule prepared by Mr. Clotworthy Stephenson of Law's improvements on and adjacent to New Jersey Avenue with description and valuation thereof. All were completed about the year 1800. On the map in Moore and Jones' Traveller's Directory, 1802, *the city buildings are seen at a glance and Mr. Law's appear to comprise a considerable proportion of all.

At the sale of lots by the city Commissioners those on the river between the Arsenal and Navy Yard were the most eagerly sought and commanded the highest consideration. The speculators, evidently thought the commercial advantages of this water front would cause the squares near by to be first utilized. Of the large investors Mr. Greenleaf and Mr. Law were of the same opinion and the former selected the vicinity of the Arsenal for his solid blocks while the latter New Jersey Avenue, positionally the artery of that section.

Mr. Law's fortune when he came to America was about £50,000; to this is to be added £31,000 William Blane of London entrusted him with to invest, making the entire fund \$400,000. Blane was to have a sixth share in the investments in which they were mutually concerned. Mr. Law's account in his own handwriting with Mr. Blane, much mutilated, is in the chancery cause, Law vs. Adams. The Auditor says it is fair and excuses its faults "occurring in the multiplicity of Mr. Law's transactions and embarrassments, pecuniary and domestic, as well as from his known habit of forgetfulness." That Law did his utmost to save his friend from loss appears by a declaration on the land records, July 17, 1823, and this provision in his will: "To my friend Wm. Blane of London * * * * * I give and bequeath all the remainder of my property to him and his heirs forever, after paying all debts and the bequests herein devised. My heirs will not be displeased by my attentions to Mr. Blane. He has an amiable

* S. S. Moore and S. W. Jones' *Travellers' Directory or a Pocket Companion from Philadelphia to New York and from Philadelphia to Washington*. Philadelphia, 1802.

family, and has been unfortunate with me in the city purchase and as he is the only one who has lost by me, I am anxious that he should not be a sufferer."

And it is a fact, Blane was the only one who lost through Law. Law was never insolvent, although in his latter years in dire distress for cash. His estate was closed before the Civil War. His realty was disposed of at prices which would be considered ridiculous now, yet it yielded \$175,000. His minor creditors were settled with at once and his larger ones and legatees received principal with 130% additional, accumulated interest.

The treatise on India, already mentioned, shows Mr. Law's interest in the sugar industry and to promote it he conveyed to James Piercy the south half of Square 744 with the stipulation that Piercy was to erect a sugar refinery thereon of prescribed dimensions in certain time. Piercy executed a first mortgage to Law for the entire purchase money £1860 6s 8p., and a second mortgage to secure Law £1875 and James Ray £937 10s., advances in cash, and Daniel Carroll of Duddington, £1218 15s., the value of 500,000 brick. Additional advances by Law, Ray and others in large amounts to the sugar refiner indicate the project was on a large scale. It was the *first* manufacturing enterprise in the city of Washington and the *largest*. The sugar came from the West Indies. The Sugar House was at the southeast corner of Square 744, fronting river and canal; the main building was eight stories high and the wing five. These dimensions are from Stephenson's schedule in the early chancery causes. Fortunately the refinery is pictured; it is prominent in the view of the City of Washington, from beyond the Navy Yard, published by Lewis P. Clover, New York, 1834. There is exact agreement between picture and description in the schedule. The structure disappeared in 1847.

Law, Ray and Piercy, the three sugar principals, all went into chancery; each on his own hook filed a bill against the co-promoters. Ray accused Law of everything on the calendar of crime but gave him credit for an adroit move. Law, in the land of his birth, experienced the uncertainties and vexatious delays of litigation, so when he sued Ray, he took the precaution



MR. LAW'S RESIDENCE
NEW JERSEY AVENUE AND C STREET SOUTHEAST

to have his adversary on a "pretended" demand safely and snugly in a Baltimore jail, so he could not possibly appear and answer, which Ray claimed was "a sinister advantage."

The house in which Mr. Law lived was judicially fixed in the chancery cause—Law vs. Adams. It is located on New Jersey Avenue, near the intersection with C Street Southeast, and was built by Mr. Law, surely by and probably before, 1799. This was the home of Law in the heyday of prosperity. Here he with inborn ease and grace his elegant and munificent hospitality bestowed upon diplomat, statesman and savant; and Mrs. Law, when she was mistress of the mansion, charming and vivacious, wore the laurels of social triumph. Likely, it was at this house of Mr. and Mrs. Law, they, in the spring of 1797, received Louis Philippe and his two brothers and entertained the Princes with a splendor befitting royalty. And here, too, after his retirement, visited General and Mrs. Washington.

Mr. Law, sold in 1818, the mansion to Dr. Frederick May, who lived in it, as did the Doctor's sons; John F. a noted local physician and Henry who became a prominent lawyer of Baltimore. The late Joseph Holt, Judge Advocate General during the Civil War, acquired the property in 1857, and from that date until his death, of recent occurrence, occupied it.

Law is more called to mind in this generation by the substantial building at the Northwest corner of New Jersey Avenue and C Street, Southeast, than by any other structure. Originally three residences, they were connected and leased by the United States Government for the Coast Survey and other branches of the service. Then it was remodeled for a hotel and styled the Law House. Now it is the Varnum.

Mr. Law took no prominent part in the local government, however, his son, John, was a member of the Eighth Council, first Chamber, 1809; his son Edmund, was a member of the Common Council, Tenth Council, 1812; Eleventh Council, 1813; Twelfth Council, 1814; and his grandson, Edmund, of the Common Council, Twenty-third Council, 1825, and Twenty-sixth Council, 1828.

Mr. Law maintained a close correspondence with his family in England, and visited it in 1802, 1825 and 1830.

Mr. Faux (*Memorable Days in America—1823*) thus describes Mr. Law's appearance and characteristics :

Mr. Law is kind, agreeable and benevolent to all. In his personal appearance he is small, lean, withered and rustic. His nose, however, is noble, like Lord Ellenborough's, but his mind is perhaps nobler than that of any of the family, although he lives in greater simplicity than a country squire of England.

Mr. Law talks in an oratorical manner, and with an energy of action which makes him appear much in earnest. He is full to overflowing and quite inexhaustible. He writes with great velocity.

Mr. Law's politeness, perhaps, cannot better be illustrated than to disclose with what grace he could invest so formal an instrument as a bill of exchange.

Exchange for } To the Right Revd George Law,
£250. } Bishop of Bath and Wells, London.

MY LORD,

At sight pay to the order of Messrs. Hottenquer & Co. at the Banking House of Messrs. Jones, Loyd & Co., London, Two hundred and fifty pounds, & charge to % of

Yr Obt Servt,

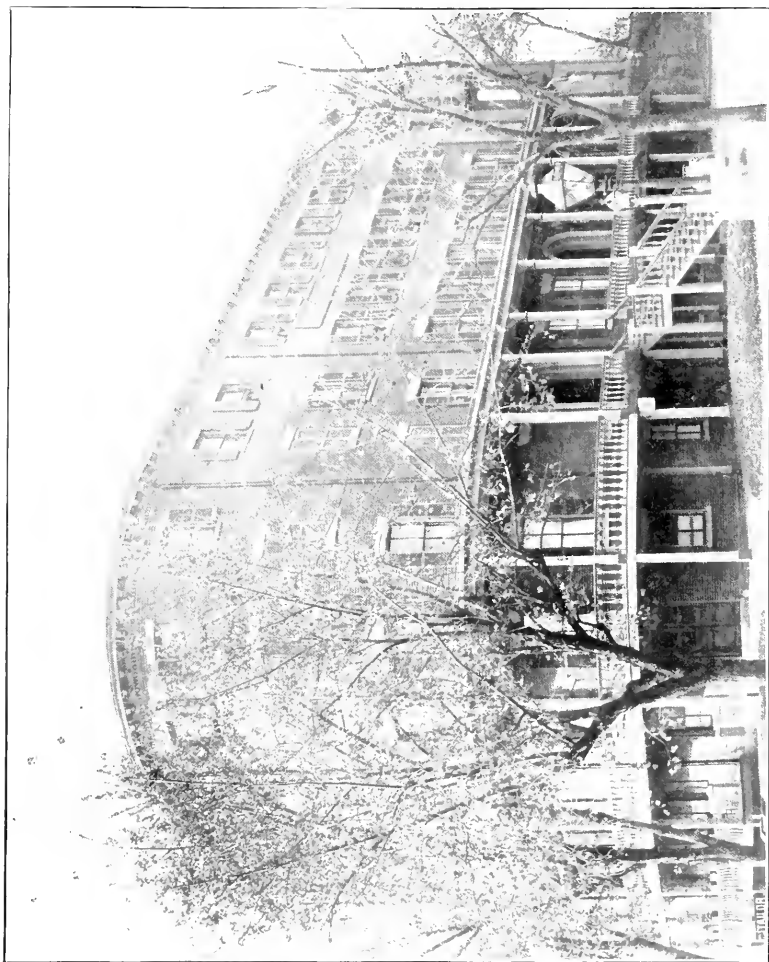
PARIS, 4th April, 1831.

THOMAS LAW.

Law's absentmindedness was proverbial. Anecdotes thereof are numerous in the memories of the oldest inhabitants. The sudden request for his name would frequently drive it from his recall. He was mistrustful of his freakish memory and tried to guard from the likely slip. It is a family reminiscence that if in his wakeful moments he had an inspiration he would hastily wrap himself in a blanket and wildly rush about, exclaiming: "Pen and ink, pen and ink, an idea, I have an idea, quick!"

"Nemo," in his Rambles, says a gentleman then living (1883), related that he met Law, who inquired his destination. He replied: "I am on my way to 'The Retreat' (Law's country residence* beyond the Eastern Branch) to dine with other invited friends this very hour." He added: "Law's genial wit, that flowed with his wine, made his guests forget the hasty preparation of the forgotten dinner." Law's narrowed means never diminished his hospitable disposition.

* Mansion described in Faux's *Memorable Days in America*.



THE LAW HOUSE

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY MAY 23, 1820.

Such a splash as we had at Mr. Law's yesterday ! Near a hundred gentlemen ; all the farmers of Prince George's county for many miles around, and all the gentry from Washington. And no more ceremony, and quite as much festivity and playfulness as among a flock of children just broke loose from school. Anthrobus, with his white horse rearing up perpendicularly half a dozen times, from impatience to start ; and his English servant, to be even with his master, dancing off, in short jumps, for about forty yards, then giving whip and spur and dashing through Mr. Law's clover field like a thunderbolt, to get to the gate before his master, who was driving at the rate of twelve miles an hour ! Then, such a rattling of carriages and clattering of horses' hoofs ! But first, such a dinner ! But before that such fine punch, down at the spring beyond the pavilion, on the hill in the woods. Then, such excellent songs after dinner ! Graff has a Dutch parody on Jessie of Dumblane, which is admirable. The President laughed 'til he cried, and I believe would have danced if a fiddle had struck up. The good man sat at table beating time with his fork to the songs sung by Graff and others, with all the kindness and amiability of his nature.

Mr. Law delivered a great speech. It was a meeting of the Agricultural Society, but the speech was over before I got there. On asking Mr. Adams for an account of it, he said "it was a love song about murder ; in other words, an agricultural speech in praise of manufactures." Quite in his style ! eccentric poetry interlarded with * * * In short, it is not possible to conceive of a more agreeable country party than it was—so far as agreeableness can exist without ladies.

Your affectionate father,

WM. WIRT.

To Laura H. Wirt.

Mr. Law disclaimed atheistical tenets and declined church authority. He says: "I have always been an advocate for permitting men to pursue their interests unobstructed by governmental interference, according to the suggestions of their reason, and to seek salvation according to the dictates of their own conscience." His guide was the moral sense or the divinity within. Yet inconsistent with his avowed ideas, he did attend the Unitarian Church and generously support it.

In a single issue of the *Daily National Intelligencer*.

Saturday, October 5, 1822.

THOMAS LAW.

REVENUE.

* * * * *

I am almost tired by unheeded quotations and Cassandrian firewarnings. If our own experience, if facts from other nations, and if mathematical conclusions, are unable to rouse the lethargic neither will the voice of one risen from the dead.

Sickness and sorrow are all around me, and I scrawl this in a slight fever—perhaps it is my last.

HOMO.

JOHN LAW.

The friends of the late John Law, Esq.,* (who departed this life last night at 10 o'clock) are requested to attend his funeral this afternoon, at 4 o'clock, from his late residence on Pennsylvania Avenue.

EDMUND LAW.

Edmund Law was chosen President of the Legislative Council, (Pensacola, Florida) the session of which was to have terminated on the 22d of last month.

Mr. Law survived all his children, the two sons, natives of India, and the equally beloved daughter born in the Capital City. Eliza died August 7, 1822,† John, October 4, 1822, and Edmund about 1823, all untimely. Like the father, the children were intellectual and kindly hearted. John and Edmund were both interested in governmental affairs; John at the time of his death was President of the local Board of Aldermen, and Edmund the Legislative Council of Pensacola, Florida. John was a talented lawyer.

Mr. Law's strong constitution finally succumbed to the effect of Asiatic residence. In the latter years his hand was tremulous and his form bent. His distress and disease was increased by embarrassment, more, as he was deeply sympathetic, by broken ties and wifely privation. His mind, was not impaired when he drew his will within two years of his death, as the phraseology indicates, and perhaps he retained his intellectual vigor until the end. During the last year he required a constant attendant. After an illness of ten days, July 31, 1834, at 6 o'clock in the morning, Thomas Law died. His friends and acquaintances were invited to attend the funeral from his late residence on Capitol Hill at four o'clock in the afternoon of the day following. He was buried in the St. John's graveyard (square 276); the remains were removed to Rock Creek Cemetery, and there repose with "the unknown."

I have recorded dry detail and refrained from the glamour of humor. I have adhered to a sketch and only imparted a suggestion of the erudition and experience of him of whom it was said: "His worth is not one-tenth of it known."

*Obituaries in *Daily National Intelligencer*: October 7, 22, November 21, 1822.

†Obituary in the *National Intelligencer*, August 14, 1822.

Law's life was a success. Brick and stone are monuments of his usefulness. His gentle words and kindly deeds have made imperishable impress. No tablet marks his resting place. Though his grave is unknown, his fame will not fade away.

Time ! thou destroyest the relics of the past,
And hidest all the footprints of thy march
On shatter'd column and on crumbled arch,
By moss and ivy growing green and fast.

* * * * *

Yet triumph not, O Time, strong towers decay,
But a great name shall never pass away.



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 369 526 8